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Tsetse fly in Arabia.

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MEMORANDA:

MEDICAL, SURGICAL, OBSTETRICAL.

TSETSE FLY IN ARABIA. ✓

On October 30th, 1903, whilst crossing the Dakkham country one found on the Haushabi bank of the Tiban River a blood-sucking fly, presenting tsetse characteristics, but smaller and differing from any species then described by Austen in his monograph on tsetse flies. On submitting a specimen of this fly on October 30th, 1906, to Mr. Newstead of the Tropical School of Medicine, Liverpool, he very kindly identified it for me as *Glossina tachinoides* (Westwood), which he informs me is specifically identical with specimens of *G. tachinoides* from the Benue River in Northern Nigeria.

This species of tsetse fly is thus the first recorded from beyond the African Continent. In S. Arabia the fly was first found at the foot of Jabal Hashar in Haushabi on the bank of the Tiban River. Here several belts of tamarisk occur, and within half a mile a large marsh in the Dakkham country exists. A second specimen was caught near Addar Rega, at the junction of Wadi Rafad and Wadi Addar Rega also in Haushabi. Five specimens were also caught near the volcanic hot springs of Hawemi, adjoining the Wadi Natid. The fly occurred here in cactus belts, being very locally distributed—in fact, none were seen at Am Hathewa hot springs about 11 miles away. It occurred freely at Kurrash, on the right bank of the Wadi Natid, a halting place on the great caravan track to Mavia and Tais, 1½ miles below Hawemi. Here are found volcanic springs of cold water arising from tumuli of red and grey mica-laden clay. Flies were not seen near the water's edge, but in the adjoining thick belts of euphorbia, babal, and tamarisk.

In Subaihi three specimens were caught during the demolition of the forts by the escort to the Commission in the Al Hay Gorge; they were also several times seen along the banks of the Ghail Akashi and Ghail Maula. Tsetse flies are sparsely seen between Nakil Madraga and Sanawi in North Subaihi. Here the flies occurred in belts of tamarisk and babal thorn, never in the date groves or along patches of cultivation. These flies, occurring as they did scantily amongst myriads of other flies, were very difficult to catch, whilst the hostility of the Arabs in Subaihi precluded any attempts to pass beyond the visual limits of our camping positions.

The Arabian *Glossina tachinoides* does not depend for its existence on big game, for, excepting gazelle, nothing else frequents the belts of bush which it haunts. Only once was the fly recognized by Arabs, and then by a band of wild Bedouins from North-Western Subaihi, who sought medical advice at Camp Wadi Kaluli. They stated this fly used to be more frequent in Subaihi, that it bit goats, donkeys, horses, dogs, and men, but did not attack camels or sheep. They further stated that it sucked blood only after the spring rains, that some years it disappeared from

Haushabi



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a district entirely, that rarely it became abundant, and then they moved their settlement and cattle by night marches to a fly-free district. They further had noted a marked diminution in the game in Subaihi, but were uncertain whether it was not due to the introduction of Winchester rifles from Jibutil rather than to cattle murrain.¹

In conclusion, I wish to express my great indebtedness to Mr. Newstead of the University, Liverpool, for having kindly identified the species of fly above discussed.

It is worthy of note that horse sickness has again appeared at Kataba in the Amiri country, a Turkish town situated in the Dthalla Valley, 1½ miles from Jabal Hashar where the fly was first found.

Liverpool.

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